political leaders the context in which a decision to release a limited consignment of non-lethal items to HMGN was taken.

Government of India is aware of reports suggesting that arms and ammunition have been supplied to Nepal or are under consideration by some countries including Pakistan and China. Government of Nepal has been sensitized to our views in this regard. Government is closely monitoring the issue and will take steps as appropriate.

Bus serivces between India and Bangladesh

†1948. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether certain steps are being taken to develop bilateral relations and restore mutual faith between India and Bangladesh, if so, the details thereof.

(b) whether initiatives are being taken for restoration of bus service from some routes for enhancing movement between India and Bangladesh;

(c) if so, the routes through which buses would ply between India and Bangladesh;

(d) whether Bangladesh agrees to the fact that anti-India activities are going on in that country; and

(e) if so, the initiatives taken to contain the anti-Indian activities in Bangladesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir. There have been interactions at high level between India and Bangladesh to develop bilateral relations and restore mutual faith. Prime Minister met Bangladesh Prime Minister on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC Summit in July 2004. The Bangladesh Foreign Minister visited India twice in May-June 2004 and in November 2004. Other Ministerial visits from Bangladesh include those of Minister of Commerce in November 2004, Minister of Finance in December 2004 and Health Minister in April 2005. The most recent ministerial visit was by External Affairs Minsiter to Dhaka from August 6-8-2005. Visits by the Indian Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and the Minister of Water Resources are also expected

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

to take place. Official level meetings have taken place including those of the Home Secretaries and the Water Resources Secretaries in September 2004. Foreign Office Consultations were held in June 2005. The third meeting of the Joint Working Group on Trade took place in Dhaka from 1-2 August 2005. During these meetings, both sides reaffirmed the importance they attached to the bilateral relationship and expressed their intent to further expand, deepen and strengthen cooperation.

(b) and (c) During the Foreign Office Consultation held in June 2005, the two sides discussed issues relating to improved connectivity in the region. Both sides agreed to explore the possibility of commencing Dhaka-Guwahati, Dhaka—Shillong and Dhaka—Siliguri bus services.

(d) No, Sir, Bangladesh denies presence of any anti India activities and has assured us that it would not allow its territory to be used against interests of a third country, especially a friendly country like India.

(e) We have raised the issue of anti- India activities with Bangladesh at all levels, including at the highest political level. PM raised this matter with the Prime Minister of Bangladesh (BDPM) during their meeting on the sidelines of the BIMST-EC summit. BDPM assured PM that Bangladesh did not want anyone to use their territory for terrorism. The matter was also taken up with the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh during his visits to India. It has been discussed at the level of Foreign Secretaries, Home Secretaries and Joint Secretaries as well as in the biannual meetings of the Director Generals of Border Security Force and Bangladesh Rifles. During the Foreign Office Consultations held in June 2005, the two sides reaffirmed their commitment not to allow their territory to be used for any activities inimical to each other's interests.

Indians imprisioned abroad without visa

1949. SHRI TARLOCHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state;

(a) the number of imprisoned Indians in varioius countries who have been arrested because of not having proper visa; and

(b) what steps have been taken by Government to get them released.